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JPRS L/8398

13 April 1979

TRANSLATIONS ON NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA  
(FOUO 14/79)

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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

PALESTINIAN LEADERS DISCUSS PROS, CONS OF PNC MEETING

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI In Arabic 9-15 Feb 79 pp 26-28

[Article: "Another Question to the Leaders of the Resistance: 'What Are the Pluses and Minuses of the Latest PNC Meeting?'" ]

[Text] The results of the 14th session of the Palestine National Council [PNC] continue to be the subject of debate in many circles, particularly among various chapters of the Palestinian movement which had hoped that the session would settle the question of the new structure of the Executive Committee of the [Palestine] Liberation Organization [PLO], and especially the question of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] regaining its seat on the Executive Committee after an absence of about 4 years.

Despite the almost unanimous affirmation that the session's positive results outweigh most of the remaining negative aspects, the lack of agreement at the session on the nature of the new structure of the Executive Committee was not the only negative aspect, for there is still the question of the apportionment of the Arab financial allocations among the various organizations. Since there was no agreement on the ratios of apportionment, the matter was left to the Executive Committee to decide, while Fatah has demanded that all the financial allocations be kept at the disposal of the PLO until all chapters are integrated.

In an effort to get an idea of the Palestinians' appraisal of the achievements of the session, AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI put a specific question to four of the participants; namely, Hani al-Hasan (Fatah), Nayif Hawatmah (Democratic Front), 'Abd-al-Rahim Ahmad (Arab Liberation Front), and Zuhayr Muhsin (Sa'igah).

The specific question was: "What is your objective appraisal of the real achievements of the PNC's 14th session, and what are the salient pluses and minuses?"

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Hani al-Hasan:

Plus: Unanimity on Political Resolutions

Minus: Popular Front Is Not Returning to Executive Committee

The session was very important in that we all, as Palestinian forces and as independents, agreed on numerous vital political issues. The 14th session was the first one at which there was unanimous agreement on the political resolutions. Unanimous agreement was also reached on the principle of continuing the dialog with Jordan. As for the issue of leadership, Fatah was most intent on maintaining internal balances within the Palestinian arena.

For us, Fatah, the important thing was that the PLO retain an overwhelming majority. The formulations that were proposed for modifying the makeup of the Executive Committee could not muster a majority in their favor, particularly among the independents. So we decided that, according to the by-laws, there was no need for the Executive Committee to resign. Furthermore, the conference gave it a vote of confidence. The only thing that we had hoped for but which did not come about was for the readmission of the Popular Front to the committee; however, I am sure that within the next 3 months the Popular Front will be able to return to the Executive Committee.

Nayif Hawatmah:

Plus: Rectifying the Palestinian-Jordanian Dialog

Minus: Popular Front Will Not Get Into Executive Committee

For the first time in years, the council unanimously approved the phased political program for national unity under the banner of the PLO. Also, all chapters of the resistance movement have joined in preparing the groundwork for the phased political and organizational program, ending all political opposition to the PLO program that was approved in 1974.

This is a gain for our people, for national unity and for the independent nature of Palestinian decision-making. It is also a very good omen for our countrymen inside as well as outside the occupied homeland, for all the forces of the revolution now accept a single, integrated phased national program.

The Palestinian-Jordanian Dialog

The 14th session also approved resolutions which set the control and conditions for the success of the Palestinian-Jordanian dialog--an issue that was the subject of a Palestinian dispute prior to the convening of the 14th session. However, the session succeeded in establishing controls for the faithful or a sound interpretation of the resolutions of the Rabat, Algiers and Baghdad summit conferences, so as to insure for the revolution and the PLO a united stand in the search for a new and sound framework for

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joint action in Palestinian-Jordanian relations and to insure that, when implemented, they would result in common action against Camp David and the autonomy plan. They would also lead to setting right Palestinian-Jordanian relations on the basis of the right to self-determination, to the return to the homeland, and to national independence, as well as the PLO's right to represent all the Palestinian people and to be present among them in all areas, including Jordan, pursuant to the resolutions of the Arab summit conferences, the last of which was held in Baghdad. This achievement also constitutes a great gain for our people and revolution in that it eliminates political contradictions and unites the Palestinian leadership in the dialog with Jordan.

The 14th session also approved a most important resolution, one which reflects a determination to infuse the spirit of democracy into relationships within the ranks of the revolution. This denounces internecine warfare and the resort to firearms in disputed matters. This resolution defeats efforts to use the strategy of giving fanciful promises with the object of creating dissension among the forces of the revolution and weakening their unity.

The session also solved financial problems in a way that insures warmer relations among the various chapters of the revolution. This is of great importance for the safeguarding of the independence of Palestinian decision-making.

Where is the New Executive Committee?

We had hoped that the 14th session would select an Executive Committee which would put into action all these achievements and guarantee a dominant role for the advocates of national unity and the guardians of the independence of Palestinian decision-making; unfortunately, however, we were faced with a series of impasses that led to a dead end.

Strengthening the trend toward national unity and the independence of Palestinian decision-making calls for the participation of the chapters of the resistance which enjoy a high level of political independence from the Arab big powers on the Executive Committee. That is why, to insure unity of command, the "Popular Front" should have been admitted to the "Executive Committee. Likewise, to insure the independence of Palestinian decision-making, those groups which enjoy such independence should have been admitted to the Executive Committee.

Lastly, we will exert all our efforts in the coming days and weeks to mind the error that occurred during the final 15 minutes of the closing meeting of this session, in order to insure the work of this political and organizational session will be translated into a concrete and creative reality under the banner of unity and the independent character of Palestinian decision-making so that the accomplishments and achievements of this



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session will become concrete gains for our people and revolution and for all the forces of Arab steadfastness in the face of the Camp David accords and the liquidationist autonomy plan.

'Abd-al-Rahim Ahmad:

Plus: United National Stand

Minus: Preservation of the Status Quo

The PNC held its 14th session under numerous and varied circumstances and conditions, all of which required a general political course which, in the Palestinian arena, essentially meant the need to unite the various chapters of the resistance politically and organizationally down to the lowest levels.

The thinking of nearly all participants was influenced by the political developments that preceded the convening of the PNC. They were all opposed to the Camp David agreement, and in favor of the joint national action charter between Syria and Iraq and the decisions of the ninth Arab summit conference in Baghdad--albeit in differing degrees or with some reservations.

The Pluses of the Last Session

Notwithstanding the results of the 14th session of the PNC, which were characterized by a preservation of the status quo, the work of the PNC reflected numerous pluses which must be emphasized. These were:

Overall unity of the national stand and agreement on the importance and necessity of national unity as the framework for the interaction of all opinions within the Palestinian arena, in order to achieve a strong and sound national stand that is capable of putting up a capable and effective resistance against proposals that imply surrender and plans that are aimed at the liquidation of the Palestine issue.

Insistence of the forces that are more deeply rooted in the Palestinian arena on achieving national unity, even if at the cost of secondary political concessions that do not affect the fundamental issues, or of agreeing to organizational formulations proposed with the aim of weakening and hamstringing the Executive Committee.

Admission of new Palestinian forces into the PNC, with the right to participate in PLO bodies, such as the central council and all the others.

Approval of the political program for Palestinian national unity, together with the amendments proposed by the Executive Committee, such as endorsement of the joint national action charter between Syria and Iraq, as well as the Baghdad summit conference decisions.

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Approval of the organizational plan for national unity among the chapters of the Palestinian resistance, even though certain participants kept the plan from being given a concrete form and the legitimacy of the approval of the PNC. However, assigning the implementation of the plan to the Executive Committee requiring that it first take all steps to enable all the Chapters of the resistance to participate actively and effectively in the Palestinian decision-making and to implement the resulting decisions democratically will be a point of contention for the Executive Committee and for the PLO Central Committee.

These were the pluses; the minuses are represented in forces within the council which have sought to preserve the status quo in a vain effort to counteract the positive political developments among the masses within the Arab homeland and to prevent their effect upon national and Arab decision-making regarding the future of the Palestinian cause.

Zuhayr Muhsin:

Plus: Agreement on Palestinian Unity Plan  
Minus: Dilemma on Makeup of Leadership

The final meeting of the 14th session of the PNC might give a negative impression of the outcome of the session as a whole. Unquestionably, the last day of this session was tense and difficult and wrought with irritations. At that meeting, a state of divisiveness nearly developed, and this would have been a grave threat to the position and future of the PLO. This was a surprising and startling development, one that baffled most people, even most council members, inasmuch as the council meetings had all along been proceeding positively and encouragingly and the plan for national unity, both political and organizational, had been unanimously approved during the first days of the session.

It was only at this particular session that political contradictions were reduced and conflicts and differences almost totally eliminated--something that had not been possible in any of the previous sessions. At this session also unanimous agreement was reached on the plan for national unity based on a democratic, confrontational foundation which requires respect for and adherence to the principle of collective leadership.

Consequently, we do not think too much weight should be given to the momentary misunderstanding brought about by the agitated and artificial atmosphere of the final day's meeting.

Positive Attitude of Popular Front

Certainly the problem of the makeup of the leadership that came up sharply on the last day did not take anyone by surprise--particularly the leaders of the various chapters. For weeks prior to the convening

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of the session it was anticipated that a difficult dilemma would be faced when the question of the makeup of the leadership came up for debate--that is, the makeup of the new Executive Committee.

For one thing, it was clear that the PFLP would resume its seat on the Executive Committee, after sitting on the opposition side for more than 4 years. The PFLP was attending this session with a totally positive attitude toward the PLO's political program which it had helped to draw up 3 months before the convening of the session. It was also coming to the PNC after all the enmity and friction that existed between it and some of the other organizations--particularly the Sa'igah and the Democratic Front--had been ended. Also the PNC was being held within the framework of everyone proceeding to the start of a new era of cooperation and joint struggle to advance the cause of Palestinian national action and the PLO, and to give concrete shape to the objective of national unity.

This positive new relationship within the various chapters was the object of unwarranted suspicion by certain colleagues within the Fatah leadership. The world was told that it was the result of the Syrian-Iraqi rapprochement and an attempt by Iraq and Syria to impose their influence and control within the PLO.

It was also portrayed as an attempt to cut Fatah down to size or rob it of the Palestinian decision-making role, arguing that the guarantee of independent Palestinian decision-making lies in keeping this decision-making in the hands of Fatah alone.

I would like to explain here that the Iraqi-Syrian rapprochement has indeed had some positive effects on the chapters' relations with each other. This is only natural. But it is not necessarily true or reasonable to say that all the positive relationships that have developed among the chapters are the result of the Syrian-Iraqi rapprochement, because these relationships began to develop many months before the Iraqi-Syrian conference. One must not forget that these chapters had signed the Tripoli document at the end of November 1977, following Sadat's treasonable visit to occupied Jerusalem, as a step in the Palestinian response to the "Sadat initiative" and his policy of surrender and liquidation.

Ever since that day there has been no misunderstanding within these organizations, with the exception of the single instance between them and Fatah. One should also not forget that all these organizations had participated in drawing up and approving the plan for Palestinian unity weeks prior to the miracle of the Syrian-Iraqi conference, at a time when there was not the slightest hint that such a miracle would happen.

These chapters felt it imperative to expedite the settlement of all disputes among them, as well as between them and the national organizations,

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and also to rally behind a national political line following Sadat's visit to Jerusalem. This feeling grew even stronger after Sadat signed the Camp David agreement.

This doubled the determination of the chapters of the revolution to respond to the blatant betrayal which has brought the conspiracy to liquidate the Palestinian question to the point of actual implementation.

Is it, therefore, reasonable to expect that these chapters, which were able to overcome their differences and move quickly toward mutual understanding and solidarity, would revert to fighting and squabbling, after the important positive development of the Syrian-Iraqi agreement--a development that is decisive in the Arab arena?

It was an offense against everybody, including the PLO and national unity, to portray the situation contrary to what it was and to cast doubt and suspicion upon the chapters' earnest desire for agreement and cooperation, even exploiting this positive phenomenon for the purpose of creating a sharply divisive situation that is artificial, unjustified and of no benefit to anyone.

#### Fatah's Position

It was not in the interest of the Fatah leadership that the state of solidarity which developed among the various chapters should be pictured as a response to the Sadat betrayal, or as being behind a wave against Fatah itself--even though everybody was hard at work assuring the realization of the largest possible measure of reform within the PLO and its organs and the creation of the conditions necessary to translate the concept of national unity into a firm and stable reality.

The PNC, in its recent session, has achieved great results that far outweigh the disagreement over the formation of the Executive Committee--or even the Executive Committee itself.

It approved the political and organizational plan. It was also evident throughout all the meetings that, for the first time, everyone was speaking the same or a very similar political language, the essence of which was the condemnation of Sadat's initiative of surrender and liquidation, the futility of any hope for a just political settlement of the dispute in the area, the positive evaluation of the Iraqi-Syrian rapprochement as a fundamental step toward regaining the strategic balance against the enemy, and the regeneration of hope and confidence among Arabs in general and Palestinians in particular.

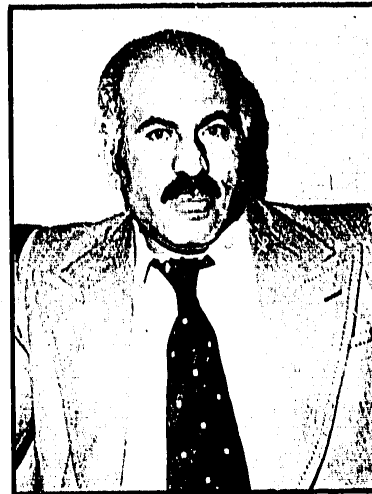
We continue to be convinced that the important pluses that emerged during the work of the PNC will overshadow and eliminate any temporary negative impressions. In short, the session honoring the late Houari Boumediene was a successful one that witnessed earnest, fertile discussions. The success of the session was not diminished by the transitory setbacks during the final moments.

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HANI AL-HASAN:  
"Fatah is eager for equilibrium"



ZAHAYR MUHSIN:  
"No one is against Fatah"



'ABD-AL-RAHIM AHMAD:  
"The minimum limit"



HAWATMAH:  
"Spreading the democratic spirit"

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AL-ASSAD FINDS NEW POLITICAL STRENGTH THROUGH IRAQI ALLIANCE

London THE MIDDLE EAST in English Mar 79 pp 45-48

[Text]

The Syrian-Iraqi alliance has improved Syria's standing in the Arab world and is a blow to American policy in the Middle East, according to Ziad Shawky, recently in Damascus. He looks at developments inside Syria and their implications for the region. He also assesses the effect the alliance with Iraq is likely to have on Syria's domestic and foreign policy, and examines the steps President Assad (right) may take to steer the country through what promises to be a troubled time for the area.

From about the middle of 1977 until a few months ago it looked as if President Assad in particular and Syria in general were losing the importance they enjoyed in the Arab world in 1975 and 1976. The inadequacy of Assad's initial response to President Sadat's diplomatic initiative seemed to suggest that there was a basic weakness in Syrian policy.

The stalemate in Lebanon, complicated by constant Israeli interference and right-wing intimidation, made Syria appear politically and militarily impotent. Lebanon was described as Syria's Yemen. This, together with serious inflation, a reduced Plan, assassinations, religious rioting, and discontent in the major Syrian cities signalled the end of Assad's regime to some commentators.

Saudi and Gulf finance was reduced to a trickle. Problems in Lebanon and elsewhere were capitalised on by the United States, Israel and Egypt to force Syria to fall into step with Egypt. Members of the Front for Steadfastness and Confrontation (Syria, Libya, Algeria, South Yemen, and the Palestine Liberation Organisation) were united more by circumstance than policy and the Front distinguished itself, mainly by its ineffectiveness.

necessity occasioned by both military and more recently by political developments. Nothing short of redrawing the regional map would have been adequate, and President Assad has been applying his proven political dexterity to this problem.

The rapprochement with Iraq is only one - albeit the most important one - of the components of Syria's emergency political planning. The main aim is to preserve Assad's most treasured political and diplomatic card - buoyancy in turbulent waters. For in the Middle East, where diplomacy and policy are essentially reactions to pressure, buoyancy is tantamount to power.

The alliance with Iraq in effect redraws the geopolitical map of the region. It will become increasingly important as the diplomatic and political ineptitude of the US and its allies becomes apparent in Iran, Turkey, the Horn of Africa and possibly in Egypt. The alliance is geared to a radical change in the regional balance which, in turn, dictates the nature and extent of the alliance.

It may appear almost contrary to nature that the alliance has progressed as far as it

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has. The "methods of operation" of the two foreign ministries have been streamlined so they can act as one unit, whenever necessary. Moreover a broadly common regional and international policy already seems to exist. This has been given impetus by Sadat's initiative and by discreet Saudi attempts to moderate Middle Eastern diplomacy in general.

This unified foreign policy is a strong instrument for the pursuit of any policies decided upon by the co-ordinated leadership. The feeling is that freedom of manoeuvre is an aim in itself, for the overall situation does not allow a firm position to be taken particularly on whether to ally oneself with the US or the Soviet Union and whether to enter into some form of negotiation with Israel.

Both countries have good relations with the USSR, although these are sometimes disturbed by disagreement on specific issues, like Eritrea for example. Relations with the United States, which in the case of Iraq were strengthened last year, were never intended to exclude the Soviet Union.

Despite Western press speculation that the Iraqis were on the point of adopting an Egyptian-style open-door economic policy, Sadat is regarded by Iraq not as a model but as a political freak. Syria's relations with Moscow are also stable, especially after the strong Soviet Union backing for Syria's role in Lebanon.

When Syrian Chief of Staff General Hikmat Shehabi cut short his trip to Moscow last November, it was really a tactical move which had little to do with Shehabi himself or with Syrian-Soviet relations.

Because of the disastrous Middle East diplomacy pursued by the United States in the region, Washington's standing with both Syria and Iraq is falling, much to the disappointment of Saudi Arabia. Saudi pressure has been neutralised because of this American weakness and also because of the Syrian-Iraqi alliance. This was especially apparent in November, when Riyadh feared that Syria might sign a treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union if Saudi leaders continued to support US-Egyptian policy.

Attempts are being made by Syria and Iraq to influence regional politics using more informal methods and agencies. One

example is the recent Kurdish military activity inside Iran. The first clashes for a very long time between Kurds and the Iranian army have been organised and led by Jalal Talbani, whose group, supported by Syria since 1975, was active both sides of the Iraqi-Turkish border last spring, summer, and autumn.

Such action needs both muscle and cover. The former is provided by the recent unification of the Syrian and Iraqi defence ministries and general staff on long-term planning and day-to-day co-ordination. Again with joint foreign policy, this will make it possible for the two countries to act as one unit, when necessary.

Much of this military co-operation will take the form of joint planning and manoeuvres, including the co-ordinated (but not joint) purchase of arms from the Soviet Union. So far, no final shopping list has been agreed upon by Syria and the Soviet Union because Moscow has not yet decided on its policy in the region apart from restoring the arms balance with Israel.

Unification of the Syrian and Iraqi information ministries will provide cover for the whole Syrian-Iraqi enterprise. But in view of the rudimentary character of both countries' information policies, this may not be enough. Joint action at the political level is already under way, however, with very close co-operation between the Syrian and Iraqi popular organisations. These comprise labour unions, writers' and journalists' organisations, student and women's organisations, peasants co-operatives, and similar groups. The only exception is the lack of any official co-ordination between religious authorities.

In general, though, joint operation is a serious matter, and both Syria and Iraq are now contemplating the possible reunification of the Baath Party. Damascus is even considering the reinstatement as Party Chairman of Michel Aflaq - the party's Syrian founder, now resident in Baghdad and under death sentence in Syria. But the fusion of the parties will take a very long time, maybe too long, for the feud between Damascus and Baghdad comprises scores of small problems, each requiring a solution.

This does not mean that Assad, as a Syrian Head of State, would try to end the chronic conflict surgically, by

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administrative decrees. But it does mean that anyone hostile to rapprochement with Iraq will be dismissed - many already have been. The most important dismissal so far is that of General Ali Madani, head of political security intelligence. He "asked to be relieved of his duties" and was put at the disposal of the Foreign Ministry.

This may have been because Madani failed to prevent the assassination a few days earlier of an informal but important political aide to the President. It is likely, however, that his removal was part of a discreet shuffling of commands. Madani was replaced by Nazih Zir, an obscure officer, hitherto chief of intelligence in Idlib, whose appointment probably does not bode well for the more established personalities at the centre.

Whatever the truth, Chief of Staff Shehadi's fate seems to be uncertain. He is considered too favourably inclined towards the US, and it is thought that Moscow does not like dealing with him. More important, he is openly sceptical about the Syrian-Iraqi alliance. He has therefore committed two cardinal political sins - frank speaking by officers is bad form and bad politics, and criticism of relations with Iraq is taboo.

Any change in the command structure of the armed forces is likely to affect General Ali Aslan, commander of the Syrian con-

tingent in Lebanon. Some expect his promotion for although Syria's adversaries there have not been "pacified", they have certainly been brought under control, at least for the time being.

Syrian policy in Lebanon over the past few months appears to be deliberate and systematic. Syria is waiting for the long-term psychological, political, and economic consequences of the bombing last July, September and October to wear down the social and political edifice that the Rightists inherited from the Ottomans, the French, and previous Lebanese regimes. It is sociological warfare, with Syrian soldiers only too eager to fire at East Beirut, to take revenge for the deaths of comrades killed by rightist militiamen.

Beyond this, very little is being done to prepare a political team to take over Lebanon when possible. The left is still under strict control, and the PLO is under increasing constraint. There is certainly no intention of allowing them to clash with the Rightists again, and some observers believe that Syria is prepared to concede some form of autonomy to the Maronites.

But the Syrians will only be prepared to deal with the Rightists after the question of the South is solved. Thus the problem of Lebanon will await solution until the new regional order in the Middle East has become clear. □

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PALESTINIAN LEADERS ON MIDEAST CRISES

London THE MIDDLE EAST in English Mar 79 pp 36-39

[Excerpts]

HABASH: Camp David Dispelled Fateh Illusions

Dr George Habash, Secretary General, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)

**A** The reason we hoped to return to the Executive Committee of the PLO is first of all Camp David and the total liquidation of our cause that it implies. This required the unity of all Palestinian organisations to produce the highest possible level of struggle.

Camp David means complete imperialist control over the whole region and its resources. Camp David dissipated Fateh's illusion that one could reach a reasonable agreement through negotiation without changing the balance of power.

The Iraqi-Syrian unification is a great weapon against this strategy, but it is not enough. Unification must include all progressive governments and forces in the area without exception.

The Jordanian regime is different - it is part of the imperialist plan, which is why we are against co-operating with it, though just now it is taking a tactical stand against the plan. Our presence among the one million Palestinians in Jordan can only be imposed by political struggle.

Sadat has his hands full repressing all dissent among his people in Egypt. As imperialist gendarme for the area, he is busy stirring up trouble in Lebanon and preparing to attack Libya. He has taken over the role of the Shah, but we all know how that role ended.

We have co-operated with the Iranian resistance for a long time and feel now that the collapse of the regime will show the people in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and other states that such regimes have their days numbered. Iran is a victory for all of us.

Many have been surprised that we, as Marxists, should be on the side of a religious movement like Khomeini's. But beyond ideology, we have in common anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist, and anti-Israeli elements.

Our armed struggle will now concentrate on targets in Israel, but our political struggle will be increasingly directed against Egypt and Arab reactionary regimes.

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**ABU IYAD: We Must Strike at U.S. Interests**

**Abu Iyad (Salah Khalaf) second-in-command to Arafat in Fatch**

**A** The Israeli escalation in South Lebanon is paving the way for total occupation. But, together with the Lebanese National Movement, we shall do all we can to prevent this.

In the meantime we shall ceaselessly escalate our struggle in the occupied territories, as long as the world continues to ignore our national right to build a state. And we are also trying to overcome the political and military obstacles to our activities beyond the borders.

Considering the US challenge to our rights and its instigation of Arab governments against us, we must strike at US interests in the region, without harming civilians of course.

King Hussain will never open his borders to us spontaneously. But new circumstances are developing fast and they will force him to do so. Would you have ever imagined such a swift end to the Shah's

rule? We don't want Hussain to have to leave. But we shall return.

In Lebanon some people say we should be disarmed like the militias. But we are covered by the Cairo Agreements. Let the authorities disarm the militias, then we will be ready to do everything necessary to reduce tension, short of letting ourselves be disarmed.

Some observers have commented unfavourably on my talks with Maronite leaders. But I saw Amin Gemayel and others who took a precise position on Israel and admitted that the future of Lebanon lies with the Arabs. Amin was prepared to tackle those in the rightist front who deal with Israel, and he supported the alliance of Lebanon, Syria and the Palestinians. When Sadat signs his treaty, the US-Egypt-Israel axis will move to Lebanon. The more people we can gain or neutralise in Lebanon the better.

**HAWATMEH: Not Much Talk of Moderation**

**Nayeg Hawatmeh, Secretary General of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)**

**A** The most important result of the PNC was that we drew up a common political programme, defining the rights of the Palestinian people in this phase.

Links between the Palestinian resistance and international progressive forces, primarily the socialist camp led by the Soviet Union, were stressed. This was a victory for the democratic forces within the Palestinian revolution and a defeat for the rightist and left-opportunist trends.

We still hope to have a more proportionate and efficient Executive Committee -- a democratic and collective leadership for which we have always fought. We have been very active in defending a correct position on the dialogue with Jordan. We diverge from others on the content, not on the principle. We are in favour of a dialogue based on the Rabat resolutions, but in all these years Hussain has refused to

implement these resolutions.

The previous Palestinian delegation to Amman gave in on these points and this must now be rectified.

Arafat's visit to Riyadh is part of his continuous balancing act among the various Arab capitals. Anyway, Saudi efforts to push the PLO to the right have been soundly defeated now. There won't be much talk of Palestinian "moderation" in settlement negotiations.

The DFLP has adopted a leading role in the armed struggle in the occupied territories, and Fateh is intensifying it too.

As to Iran, we shall have 35 million Iranians on our side in a position that the US once defined as the most important between Japan and Israel. This also opens entirely new and vast perspectives for mass movements in the oil regions.

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**JIBRIL: Camp David Signatories Buying Lebanon Land**

**Ahmad Jibril, Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC)**

**A** Most contradictions between the groups have been buried by the Syrian-Iraqi integration, which created a better atmosphere for unity. Contacts between some Palestinians and Cairo continue, but the fact that they are carried out in secret proves that these initiatives are weak.

The new situation has also compelled Fateh not to go any further with contacts like those which took place with Congressman Findley (about the recognition of Israel). Dialogue will change nothing in the American stand.

Arafat and all those who talk about peaceful confrontation between a Palestinian state and Israel realise that this is unacceptable to the Palestinian people, even to those in Galilee, and that Israel would never think of peaceful competition. One side must win completely.

If the Palestinian revolution gave up armed struggle it would renounce its major

weapon. The Syrian-Iraqi unification will create better conditions for such struggle. Syria and Iraq will change Hussain's attitude.

I am optimistic about Lebanon. In 1968 we imposed our presence and insisted on freedom of action and the Lebanese authorities were much more against us. Let's be frank, we are not alone in Lebanon. In 1968 we had the support of Nasser, now we have even more Arab support. Nobody can disarm us.

The mysterious land purchases in South Lebanon came after Camp David which provided a "solution" for one third of the Palestinian people. The others are supposed to settle elsewhere. Those who signed the Camp David agreements are the ones who are buying land for resettlement. Even the Lebanese rightists, who say that they are against such resettlement in the South, work for it.

**HASSAN: New Kind of Guerrilla Warfare Planned**

**Hani Hassan, top political advisor to Arafat**

**A** Our task at the PNC was to achieve the political independence of the PLO from any Arab or non-Arab power. The struggle was mainly between those in the PNC who depend on external forces and Fateh, which has always fought for our independence.

The second task was to adopt a positive attitude towards Jordan. Fateh will not allow Jordan to join the Camp David line.

The eventual inclusion of all Palestinian organisations on the Executive Committee would mean that all Palestinians would be represented at highest level. The political line of Fateh has been imposed although some argue that we have lost the battle on how to conduct the dialogue with Jordan.

As to the Iraqi-Syrian unification, we are in favour of it, and we are striving to turn it into an Iraqi-Syrian-Palestinian co-ordination, for we are always afraid of

alliances in which we are not members. The visit by Arafat to Riyadh on the eve of the Council underlined that we want political relations with all Arab countries.


The Israelis are now preparing to attack Jordan and South Lebanon, but they are digging their own grave. The time for expansion is over, though I am convinced that Sadat will facilitate their task by signing a peace agreement before May. Sadat is very stupid to put his future into the hands of America. This will be his last year.

Fateh is getting stronger all the time in the occupied territories. Our armed struggle will reach unprecedented levels with an entirely new kind of guerrilla warfare. Furthermore, when we so decide, no border will be closed to us. I want to conclude by saying that Fateh will never recognise Israel, even if we get our state.

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**FAHOUM: Iraq-Syria Alliance Will Not Affect Our Independence**

**Khaled Fahoum, Chairman of the Palestinian National Council**

 The PNC has laid the foundations for the increasing success of the Palestinian revolution. It has sanctioned unity and, whatever the unavoidable differences, this unity is something to which all of us are now committed as never before.

This will greatly enhance our military effectiveness, enabling us to liquidate any project for administrative so-called autonomy in the occupied territories and all policies drawn up by the US, Sadat and Israel.

Our people in these territories will get more effective help from us and our co-ordination with Iraq, Syria and all the countries of the Steadfastness Front will now be strengthened.

I really didn't see any crucial conflict in the PNC discussions. The frankness with which everything was tackled was a great lesson in democracy. The Iraqi-Syrian alliance is certainly not going to jeopardise

our independence. We are part of the great Arab liberation movement and unity doesn't constitute a risk.


Some warn us against Israeli retaliation because of our increased activity in Palestine. But we cannot renounce our national right to resist occupation, whatever the cost. Escalation is both necessary and useful.

The Shah visited Sadat on his way out. The two "kings" showed the world that they are in the same camp, the anti-people camp. But it was the people of Iran who chased out the Shah and, believe me, the people of Egypt are no less patriotic.

Mr Goulet, who spoke at the PNC on behalf of European parliamentarians, supported the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of all Palestinian people and our right to establish our state in all of Palestine. This reflected the growing awareness in the West of our just cause.

**MUHSEN: Opposed To Fateh Dialogue With Lebanon Right**

**Zuhair Muhsen, Head of PLO Military Department and Secretary-General of al-Saiqa**

 My contribution to the PNC centred on the need to resume the dialogue with Jordan and to face the fact that Sadat will sign a peace agreement. As Palestinian and Arab forces we must prepare ourselves for Sadat's surrender and the revenge that the US will take for the loss of Iran and the emergence of a new Arab front.

This revenge will take the form of war, with Sadat helping Israel even materially; this is why national unity and co-ordination with the nationalist Arab countries is now so important.

The national unity programme approved by all organisations has become the framework for all our decisions and for our future initiatives. Independence of the Palestinian revolution has a very clear meaning for us.

We want independence from the reactionary and non-nationalist regimes, but we want to work with those who have expressed a nationalist policy.

The dialogue with Jordan is a gradual, dialectical process, but the future will bring a balance of forces in our favour. I am not at all in favour of Fateh's dialogue with the rightist leadership in Lebanon. I think it will have a negative effect on our tactical and strategic line.


If it comes to war between Israel and Sadat on one side, and the Iraqi-Syrian Palestinian Eastern Front on the other, the attitude of the uncommitted countries will be to try not to get involved.

We strongly support the return to the Executive Committee of the PFLP. They have a hell of a lot to contribute to our struggle.

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ABU DAOUD: I Am Against Past Operations Now

Abu-Daoud (Muhammad Daoud Auda), Member of the Fateh Revolutionary Council, leader of Fateh left

 In the PNC there were two fronts, the progressive and conservative. Fateh remains the largest force but the others, in alliance with Fateh can achieve a lot of democratic and progressive successes, though they didn't come sufficiently organised to this PNC meeting.

Arafat still manages to exploit the differences among them. So he succeeded in getting away with his deals with the Lebanese rightists, and with his contacts with Zionists two years ago. But he did not obtain the disarmament of the fedayin, which he was ready to accept from 1976.

The eventual return of the PFLP would help to neutralise these policies. Habash and Hawatmeh should work together to fight isolation. If Arafat has his way it could be very dangerous. I know many of the messengers that trundle back and forth to Cairo.

It won't be easy for the Iraqi-Syrian alliance to prevent this, though unification

certainly strengthens the progressives. Those who see danger in this union are really concerned only about their links with Jordan, the Saudis, Sadat and Chamoun.


I am known for past operations, but I am against them now. I think we must concentrate on the occupied territories, though not with DFLP-type propaganda operations. We should only strike at targets like a ship carrying arms to Israel.

Of course, if I can get Sadat, I won't miss the opportunity, but never at the cost of involving civilians. Sadat will probably get something on Gaza out of the negotiations, and then he will return to the Arab fold to regain credibility. This will enable him to surrender further.

But the Zionists won't make concessions. They want an Israel from the Nile to the Euphrates at the risk of a Third World War. They will start with a war against the Syrian-Iraqi entity.

YAQOUB: No Such Thing as Israeli 'Progressives'

Talaat Yaqoub, Secretary General of the Palestine Liberation Front

 Our differences with the PFLP-GC reached their peak last summer with armed clashes. We split from that organisation because we prefer democratic means to overcome contradictions. The rightists in the resistance were afraid of our new ideas and our criticism of the PLO.

We believe in a strategic alliance with the socialist camp led by the Soviet Union and, as an Arab liberation movement. We also foster good relations with all nationalist Arab countries but not at the expense of our strategic objectives.

We shall always oppose any Geneva conference as well as UN resolutions 242 and 338. What we expect from the Syrian-Iraqi alliance is that it should open all borders for our military action, especially Jordan.

We believe that the present balance of power will not give us any Palestinian state. And even in return for a state we will

not recognise Israel. We agree only to establish national authority over any liberated land.

The Jordanian regime - which is an imperialist creation and tool, still wants the liquidation of the Palestinian cause. It is quiet now because it wants Arab financial support like the Baghdad funds. So far the king has won, but we must fight to re-establish the situation as it was before September 1970.

We are totally against any dialogue with Israeli "progressives" because they don't exist. We are also against contacts with the US Administration whose position will not change in the foreseeable future.

As to the recent PNC, it was not an exercise in democracy. Most of the representatives were chosen by Fateh and the PNC is still controlled by Fateh. All the structures of the Palestinian revolution must be changed, but this will be a long and gradual process.

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KAYYALI: Some Fateh People Still have Sadat Hopes

Dr Abdel-Wahhab Kayyali, former Secretary-General of the Arab Liberation Front, author and intellectual

**A** The return of the PFLP to the executive Committee of the PLO would not be a major event. The balance of forces would remain more or less the same. With Arafat adopting such an appeasing position Israel and the US find it easy not to give anything away.

The US's flirtation with the PLO started by Andrew Young is nothing but a trial balloon to strengthen the "moderates" in the PNC. By always telling Sadat to give in the US has paralysed itself and become incapable of acting on the Palestinian issue. But this suits us fine, as the balance of power is constantly shifting in our favour.

There are still people in Fateh who hope to get something from Sadat. But Israel and the US really have nothing to offer. The Palestinian people are very politically conscious. They won't settle for illusions like a town mayor who can't even supply water without an Israeli OK.

Regarding the dialogue with Jordan, the regime is there, whether we like it or not, and it is an important centre of political activity. Its absence has made Camp David bankrupt. We must extract the maximum concessions from it, without illusions. It is in Jordan's interest to accommodate us.

The emphasis on Palestinian independence at the PNC was reasonable but it may hide the real intentions of some people. The geopolitical reality of the Iraqi-Syrian unification must have a crucial influence on our strategical and tactical thinking.

Today the Palestinian leadership stresses Palestinianism to the detriment of pan-Arabism. But the Palestinians will defeat this trend, in spite of Fateh's shrewdness. Habbash knows this, but Hawatmeh stresses links with the socialist camp in the same way that Palestinianism is stressed by other groups.

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ALGERIA

REDISTRIBUTION OF POWER ANALYZED

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 14 Mar 79 pp 26, 27

[Article by Souhayr Belhassen]

[Text] Is the office of minister compatible with belonging to the political bureau? For two months that question has been the basis both for profound discussion and disagreement between the members of the political bureau, who are divided on how to organize the Party and form the government, as well as on relations between the two authorities. At a meeting beginning on 6 March the central committee of the National Liberation Front (FLN) must decide.

As was the case for the agreement on naming Col Chadli Bendjedid to the presidency of the Republic, the redistribution of power is the object of shifting alliances between a small number of men. There are two principal groups, called "militant" and "pragmatic."

On 23 February the political bureau's work seemed to have ended with the victory of the "militants"; Muhammad Salah Yahiaoui, an FLN leader, had made himself the defender of absolute primacy for the Party, reputed to control governmental activity according to the socialistic model practised in certain countries of Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union. So the task of the new government would be solely to execute.

The weekly REVOLUTION AFRICAINE was talking the next day about an "indispensable choice between administrative function and political function--two different, though complementary ideas that cannot, however, be confused or blended." The statement by the single Party's organ left the supposition that the game was over.

Nevertheless, the debate continues and in the transactions the members of what has become a phantom government have carried all the weight. Some ministers who do not want to be separated from the portfolios and even claim to be "ministers of sovereignty" (that is not exclusively technical) seem to have contributed to reversing the decision.

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Foreign Affairs Minister Abdelaziz Bouteflika, a "pragmatist", is opposed to Yahiaoui and announced his decision to abandon his ministry.

For Chadli and the army, such a departure could have repercussions later on relations abroad. In the immediate future it would ensure the ascension of Muhammad Salah Yahiaoui, who thus at the time of the presidential election would merely have put off the evil hour. Also, the president said he was in favor of retaining Bouteflika. The principle of double membership in the political bureau and the government was indirectly in effect again.

For all that, the question of the redistribution of posts was not settled. Speculations were going full blast. Will Mr Bouteflika be retained in Foreign Affairs? Will he have the rank of vice president? That is not ruled out. Another president would be Ahmed Ben Cherif, who would demand a large ministry, Hydraulics and Agriculture. But the creation of post of superminister of Economy, Industry and Agriculture, assisted by several secretaries of state, would be seriously envisaged. The post would be assigned to Belaid Abdessalam, along with a vice presidency.

With such superministries, the post of prime minister would become a kind of general secretariat to the government; its titular head would be Mr Abdelghani, Interior Minister.

No accord having been achieved between the 17 members of the political bureau, the central committee was called upon to decide. Statutorily it is that committee that approves the redistribution of tasks in the political bureau, on the proposal of the secretary general, President Chadli.

The incompatibility between belonging to the political bureau and exercising ministerial functions would not be retained a priori, but the position of the 160 members of the central committee, who are rather "militant," could still be holding back some surprises. However, nothing in the brief Algerian political tradition says decisions taken must be adhered to. In any case, the absence of precedent leaves plenty of room to maneuver.

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ALGERIA

NEW AGRICULTURAL, INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS INAUGURATED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 9 Mar 79 p 621

[Text] Inaugurations in the West

Tayebi Larbi, the Algerian minister of Agriculture and the Agrarian Revolution, from 1 to 4 March made an inspection visit to the Western part of the country, to the governorates of El-Asnam, Sidi Bel-Abbes, Oran, Tlemcen, Mascara and Mostaganem. During his tour he was to perform several dedications.

At Miliana on 1 March: 1) Dedication of a cattle feed production unit of the ONAB (National Cattle Feed Office). This unit will have a capacity of 40,000 tons per year and employ 100 workers. The ONAB has 11 other units throughout the country, with a total capacity of 370,000 tons. Five more units are in progress. 2) Laying the cornerstone of the Aribé dairy produce complex (the Ain Defla district). This complex, with an initial capacity of 30 tons of cheese per day, will employ 1,200 persons, 300 of them women, and later will employ 2,500 persons. Bovine cattle-raising units are anticipated.

At Sidi Bel-Abbes on 2 March: 1) Dedication of a new Onalait unit, with a daily capacity of 70,000 liters of milk and 12,000 pieces of cheese. 2) Dedication of the new Cofel headquarters, including an administrative building, housing, repair shop, cold storage warehouses (327-ton capacity). 3) Laying cornerstones of: a poultry slaughterhouse, capacity 2,500 chickens per day; a poultry center (5 farms, 2,500,000 chickens per year); and a socialist village (100 housing units) in Boukhanifis.

At Tlemcen on 3 March: Laying the cornerstone of a production center for eggs for consumption and a cattle-feed plant.

At Mohammadia on 4 March: Laying the cornerstone of the incubator of the poultry center.

Inaugurations in El Asnam

The secretary general of the Algerian Commerce Ministry on 22 February in El Asnam (formerly Orleansville) dedicated a distribution unit of the National

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Trade Establishment and a supermarket of the National Construction Materials Company (SNNGA).

Constituting an important storage warehouse, the ENC unit specializes in distributing hardware articles, tools, household appliances, copy machines. It is responsible for answering the needs of users, dealers, national companies, administrations and governorate consumer cooperatives.

The sales unit of Algerian Galleries, with a surface of 7,500 square meters, is located right in the center of the commune's seat. It employs some 135 persons.

New Industrial Bakery

Muhammad Tayebi Larbi, the minister of Agriculture and the Agrarian Revolution, on 22 February in the Algiers governorate dedicated the Cheraga industrial bakery, which was developed by the Interoccupational Algerian Grains Office (OAIC).

The OAIC envisages developing six more bakeries of the same type (the Mostefa Ben Brahim bakery is about to be started), to be implanted in Tlemcen, Mostaganem, Setif, Annaba, Skikda and Tizi-Ouzou. The latter, like the first development, will have a school to ensure the training of the unit's personnel, which will be open to bakers and bakery workers from the private sector. The Sempac Company, has also already sent personnel to Spain for training, so they can take charge of the new units belonging to the company. But, according to EL MOUDJAHID, realization of these plans is being delayed so that the trainees returning from their training can remain nonoperational for a long enough period after their return.

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ALGERIA

BRIEFS

JAPANESE STEEL CONTRACT--The Algerian National Steel Company has just entrusted to a Japanese group the exploitation of the Gara Djebilet iron mines (in the southwestern part of the country), as well as construction of a steel complex having an annual capacity of 10,000,000 tons. The amount of the contract is \$191,000,000. Nippon Steel had previously concluded contracts with the Algerian government for technical assistance for the factories. [Text] [Paris VALEURS ACTUELLES in French 12 Mar 79 p 69] 8946

BELGIAN TRANSPORTATION COOPERATION--A delegation from the Belgian Communications Ministry arrived in Algiers on 26 February for talks with the leaders of the Transportation Ministry, about setting up the cooperation program outlined in the document signed on 21 September 1978 by Ahmed Draia, Algerian Transportation Minister, and Henri Simonet, Foreign Affairs Minister of Belgium (see MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS, 29 September 1978, p 2575). The new discussions dealt with Belgian proposals concerning the various areas of cooperation examined at the time of the last meeting, held in Algiers from 7 to 9 November 1978 (see MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS, 24 November 1978, p 3085), in particular the modalities for financing investments relative to developing railway infrastructures, the Center for Railway Training, a Higher Institute for Ground Transportation, the implementation of repair shops and technical assistance in certain areas of exploitation. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 9 Mar 79 p 621] 8946

AUSTRIAN COOPERATION--A delegation from the Federal Republic of Austria arrived in Algiers on 1 March to discuss with leaders of the Transportation Ministry the conditions for and methods of setting up cooperation in matters having to do with railway transportation. These talks followed those engaged in in Vienna in May 1978, during which prospects for cooperation between the two countries in setting up development of railway infrastructures were examined. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 9 Mar 79 p 621] 8946

PRESSURE-COOKER ASSEMBLY LINE--On 28 February a new assembly plant for manufacturing pressure cookers was inaugurated at the headquarters of the "Aluminium" firm in the Algiers governorate, by Hadj Yala, Commerce Minister. This firm, under the protection of the governorate, specializes in manufacturing cooking utensils. Founded in 1958, abandoned in 1972 by its owner with

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liabilities of over 800,000,000 centimes, since 1973 the firm has been connected with the governorate. It currently employs 65 workers and produces 300 tons of cooking articles per year. Several months from now its active force will be 85 persons. This new manufacturing assembly line, built by an Italian contractor (Moneta), which cost nearly 7,000,000 dinars, will produce after 1980 over 150,000 Dziria pressure cookers, thus bringing production to 900 tons per year. However, in its starting phase, the manufacturing assembly line will yield only 6,000 units per month, in four sizes, 5 to 11 liters. The price to the consumer of the 11-liter model would be 150 dinars. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 9 Mar 79 p 621] 8946

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IRAN

WRITER SEES RADICAL CLERICALISM UNLIKELY TO : AVAIL

Turin LA STAMPA in Italian 3 Feb 79 p 3

[Article by Arrigo Levi: "There Is Risk of Civil War After the Uncertain Revolution--Iran: No One Can Say Who Will Win"]

[Text] The triumphs return of Khomeyni does not remove the serious tensions which are already evident in the heterogeneous coalition which called him back and which sooner or later will explode again. An ideology of Islam (after Castrosim and Maoism) mythified by an insecure west? The country's achievements and the shah's errors. The opportunism of the ruling powers toward the evolving peoples.

The story of the rise, greatness and fall of the Persian empire of Reza Pahlavi is destined to become an exemplary history, important for understanding the world in which we live and the surprises it holds for us. The shah sincerely proposed to make Iran a great modern power in a very few years. The dynasty of the Pahlavis was young, without tradition, and weak in natural links with Iranian society; but this, which in the end proved a fundamental weakness, was for a long time a force, facilitating the work of rupture which the shah, in his role as a modernizer, as Persia's Kemal Ataturk, intended to carry out, and which he succeeded in carrying out successfully for a considerable time. His "white revolution" was not a mere demagogic cover for authoritarian and partly corrupt power; it also carried real values of social and economic progress.

Today, myths and countermyths intertwine constantly and make it difficult to form an objective judgment on the Iran of Reza Pahlavi, as is the case also with Mao's China or communist Vietnam. In any case, it is a fact that the shah had not surrounded himself solely with general, greedy politicians and torturer policemen. In the years of the shah, a new technocracy was formed in Iran which includes thousands of young people educated in the best Western universities; and this is a genuinely brilliant and very ambitious elite, one which used the shah as much as it was used by him, to bring forward its own program of economic development and modernization, conceived autonomously and in many ways very attractive.

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Iran has for a long time had exemplary rates of development, which for a decade (up to 1976) were maintained at around 10 percent per year. A part of the civil reforms against the traditional powers, of the land-owners or the mullahs, had a genuine liberating content. The living conditions of the population are greatly improved. But the very rapidity and ferocity of the changes (the visitor to Tehran, a horrendous and inhuman metropolis in the grip of the anarchy of aggressive and neurotic traffic, felt even physically the violence exerted on persons by modernization) unleashed psychological and social tensions which the shah and his ruling class, in their common presumption, constantly underestimated.

With hindsight, it can be observed how they alienated from themselves the sympathies not only of the more traditional society but also those of the new emerging classes, to whom the authoritarian regime did not grant adequate liberties, powers and participation. The communists should keep silent on this aspect of the shah's regime, since the shameful political repression in Iran was in any case less than in the Vietnam of today, or in Cambodia, or in any other communist regime which might be cited. The noncommunists have not kept quiet, even if perhaps they have not spoken enough or have not been heard; in any case, it is certain that the rebellion against the shah has been nourished also by the just sympathies for the opposition from western democratic circles and countries, including Carter's campaign for civil rights.

But fundamentally, it has been the very policy of the shah and his governors that has raised against the king of kings the most extraordinary and heterogeneous political alliance imaginable--an alliance that has included moslem fundamentalists, marxist revolutionaries, the mercantile class of the bazaars, deprived by the new bureaucracy of its traditional economic functions, nationalist forces, liberals and democrats of all types, moderates and revolutionaries. Between those who advised him--beginning with Carter's America (not, unfortunately, that of Nixon)--to have more democracy and those who suggested greater repression, the shah chose a middle way, making a policy which was enough to arouse vast and indignant opposition but was not sufficient to break it; the liberalization measures came too late, and only facilitated the victory of the revolution.

It is relatively easy today to say that the shah's fall from power was therefore inevitable--especially from the time around 1976 when the shah and his advisers, having become aware that the oil reserves would not last forever, decided actually to accelerate the already mad pace of development, accentuating the imbalances between production goals and social goals. It is a fact that the shah and his governors were given many warnings, which were ignored.

In a conference held in Persepolis in 1976, attended by a hundred Western experts and about as many Iranian experts and managers (almost all of them young, and really very outstanding for their education and intellectual

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liveliness), it was said insistently by many Westerners that the political and social tensions aroused by such rapid and imbalanced development, and the brutal methods of police repression by the Iranian powers, constituted a very explosive threat, even if no one knew or could foresee at that time that the explosion would occur so quickly. But arrogance deafened the shah and his advisers, such as then Prime Minister Hoveyda, who at that time liked to give contemptuous lectures to the "turbulent" countries, such as Italy.

Forced-march development, in a backward country not subjected to iron-fisted communist totalitarianism, is in reality an attempt by any regime to achieve political stability. Development (this is a thesis worked out by the Latin American economists and dear to Guido Carli) centralizes the well-being and the resources of relatively small social groups, precisely those who occupy the advanced productive sector or the positions of power. The backward majority ends up relatively impoverished of resources, the modernized area does not expand, and the social disparities increase. But also, anyone who takes part in the modernization process feeds on great unfulfilled ambitions and on frustrations. It is in fact the urbanized population, which has improved its standard of living at the cost of traumatic disruption of traditional values and immense personal sacrifices, which generates forces of contestation, of protest, of revolution. The phenomenon is familiar to us Italians, even if it is less catastrophic in Italy.

As for Iran, the prophets of doom have been proven right sooner than they imagined: the revolutionary potential was underestimated by all, beginning with the Iranian government. If it had not been, then obviously the revolution would not have broken out: a revolution is by definition a country's unexpected act of revelation to itself, through which the country shows itself to be different from what it thought it was, or indeed, from what it had been up to that moment; it effectively changes in the course of the revolution.

The Iranian explosion is rich in lessons for all, precisely because Iran was, in many ways, a model country, widely admired, a country which had brilliantly overcome some of the most difficult problems of modernization, beginning with the problem of training a technologically advanced managerial class in a brief period of time. From Asia to the Middle East, from Africa to Latin America, a long series of countries committed to modernization processes will have to reflect on the Iranian example in the days of its failure, as in the days of its success.

To countries as different from one another as South Korea, Saudi Arabia (which, though, has a government far better rooted in its own social reality), Turkey, Nigeria, Brazil, the way of modernization must appear today more fraught with unknowns and perils. It must be admitted that the totalitarian regimes of Leninist derivation, even if they have not shown themselves to be at all superior to the liber-capitalist regimes,

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or regimes of authoritarian-capitalist type, have nevertheless shown, in managing economic progress and modernization (leaving values of liberty aside), a considerably greater capacity to preserve full political control; in short, they have shown themselves to be stronger and more stable--if necessary, with a little help from Soviet power.

For the countries which are not communist, the way of modernization is fraught with unknowns, it is a process whose outcomes are unpredictable, just as post-shah Iran is unpredictable. The triumphal reentry of the ayatollah Khomeyni does not make one forget the tensions which have already manifested themselves in the heterogeneous coalition which is calling him back and which will explode again sooner or later. Meanwhile, the country seems on the brink of civil war, and no one can say who will win. Now it is fashionable to say that "Islam will win in any case," with Islam added--after Maoism, Castroism, and so on--to the list of exotic ideologies mythified by a Western world which is insecure and has a bad conscience. In reality, Islam too, although it is an articulated and complex culture, is barely beginning to confront the difficult problems of modernization. These problems are very largely in the future and not in the past of the regions of Islamic culture; what, in the end, will remain of Islamism, it is impossible to foresee.

The clerical traditionalism, demagogic and violent, of the ayatollah Khomeyni (who nevertheless must choose, even within the Islamic republic which he wants to establish, between a compromise with the other social forces and a dictatorship, which would be the more unstable and more totalitarian it is), thus has as little chance of prevailing as the model of the future modern, industrialized and urbanized Islamic society as does the archaic system of family-feudal government of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf emirates for emerging intact from the explosive growth process which oil wealth is precipitating. The old regimes and the old ideologies are condemned; the new regimes are, by their nature, in the process of amalgamation.

The entire southern part of the world, with great material resources and immense human potential, and with its burden of traditional values and cultures, has barely begun a long and unpredictable historic journey (the most restless advanced societies appear solid by comparison), during which it will be constantly stimulated and subsequently destabilized by the impact of the ideals of liberty and well-being and by the technologies of the west, as well as by the revolutionary gospel of the communist ideologies. The opportunism and maneuvers of the great powers will aggravate matters.

It is within this framework, where old and new tensions and conflicts will develop, increasingly often, in view of the atomic threshold, that the conflict between East and West, between the United States and the Soviet Union, will evolve in the coming years. The system of relations among the powers, which in the "provincial" world of the 1950's



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and 1960's was able to have a certain functional utility, can no longer be of use in the very broad and fluid framework of the 1980's and 1990's, and should be radically thought out anew. The stakes are very high: nothing less than the maintenance of nuclear peace.

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LEBANON

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS GOOD DESPITE SECURITY PROBLEM

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 9-15 Feb 79 p 56

[Text] The striking phenomenon of Lebanon's economy is that last year's balance of payments has shown a surplus, something unprecedented even during the best years of economic prosperity, although it was (and still is) suffering from a recession due to the unstable atmosphere. Dr George 'Ashi shed some light on this phenomenon and on several aspects of Lebanon's economic problems which await long overdue solutions. He was interviewed by a correspondent of AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI. Dr George 'Ashi is secretary of the board of the Lebanese Banking Association and the director-general of the Credit Commercial de France. These positions make him privy to the hidden aspects of the banking situation.

[Question] There is an inclination to consider 1978 as a year of setback in Lebanon's economy, which had recovered somewhat during 1977. What do you think?

[Answer] It was not a year of total setback. The setback began during the second half of 1978 despite various deteriorations in security which occurred during the first half of the year following the al-Fayyadiyah incident in February. The collapse of security caused the most severe setback in Lebanon's economy, with the exception of the banking sector which did not cease its operations and which had adapted to operating under emergency conditions. Total figures indicate that in 1977 there was a surplus of \$700 million in the balance of payments. This surplus is unprecedented in Lebanon, even during the best years of prosperity. Despite the 1978 setback, the balance of payments showed a surplus of between \$250 and \$300 million.

[Question] Has the expansion in investments been a factor which helped the banking industry to move into the real estate and industrial sectors?

[Answer] There are no new investments in Lebanon's industrial sector at this time. Rather, there has been a reduction in this investment because most of the factories which were hit in 1975-76 had not completely resumed operation in 1977-78. These factories remained practically idle along with

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other factories that had tried to resume operation, because in 1978 new factories that had survived during the 2 years of war were hit. Some of these were in al-Durah, a huge industrial area which attracted several industrial, commercial and banking institutions that had moved from other areas.

Dr 'Ashi added that banking deposits improved. In April 1978 they were estimated at 14.5 billion lira, an increase of more than 1.5 billion lira over the figure for 1977. We expect that it has now reached 16 billion lira. But although banking deposits are increasing due to a theoretical increase in banking potential, the fact is, the scope of investing such deposits at the local level is narrow under the security circumstances.

[Question] Where are the banking resources being invested under the current circumstances?

[Answer] There are substantial real estate investments in Lebanon now, because real estate property is generally secure and because the Lebanese experiment has been successful in view of the country's limited size. Real estate prices continue to increase due to the fact that the banks that are committed to investing their resources could not find any place to put the money except in real estate because of the prevailing circumstances. This has stimulated the real estate market. As a result, we find that real estate prices in Sidon, for example, have increased eight times during the past 2 years. In the north, they increased five times. By contrast, the scope of banking services for trilateral trade, i.e., external transactions, has shrunk.

[Question] What are the effects of such conditions (along with the decline in the value of the dollar) on the value of the Lebanese lira?

[Answer] The value of the lira was about 3.1 lira per dollar at the beginning of 1977. Despite fluctuations in the price of the dollar, it did not change in Lebanon up or down beyond 8 percent. But because the dollar has declined against other foreign currencies, the value of the lira decreased against other strong foreign currencies. This is nothing to be ashamed of as far as Lebanon is concerned. What is unusual in Lebanon is that the lira maintained this level vis-a-vis the dollar and other hard currencies. As for the future of the Lebanese lira, one should note that the foreign exchange rate of every currency is determined by the law of supply and demand. This law, as pertaining to the currency, is determined by the balance of payments. Indeed, the balance of payments in Lebanon was favorable in 1977 and 1978, and as I mentioned earlier, it has even registered a surplus. This indicates that there is no need to worry about the value of the Lebanese lira, especially since it is strongly backed. Here I must say that the source of the lira's strength is not its backing but the equilibrium of the national economy. You may ask me how a balance is achieved when the country is in a state of war and economic recession. In fact, this is the strangest aspect of the Lebanese wonder. In a country at war, a country

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whose economy is destroyed, a country suffering from a recession--despite all that--its balance of payments registers a surplus and its currency is healthy and balanced. There are two apparent factors behind the healthy balance of payments and both in themselves are harmful to Lebanon's economy. The first factor is the transactions of visible and invisible financing of the war. The war is harmful to Lebanon and its economy. The second factor is the remittances of Lebanese expatriates who work and earn money abroad. We hope that their emigration is not going to be final because their continued residence abroad is apt to slow down the pace of reconstruction of Lebanon.

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MAURITANIA

FORCES OPPOSED TO UNITY STIRRING UP RACIAL TENSION

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 5-18 Mar 79 p 29

[Article by Said Ould Khelifa: "Who Is Threatening National Unity? The Time Has Really Not Come for Going Back to the 'Racial Problem'"]

[Text] The deadline set by President Ould Saleck for the Moroccan soldiers to leave Mauritanian national territory has practically arrived. The Moroccan power continues nonetheless to seek a diversion capable of impeding the peace process which Nouakchott seems determined to carry out to its completion.

It is against this political background that, added to the economic problems bequeathed by Mokhtar Ould Daddah, a crisis is breaking out in Mauritania which the "specialized" commentators have quickly described as a "racial problem."

According to these commentators, the peoples of the south are very discontent with the lot apportioned to them by the regime which issued from the coup d'etat of 10 July 1978. Some go so far as to speak of apartheid!

Just what is the situation of the black Mauriticians; and first of all, who are they?

Most of them are farmers and fishermen and live along the Senegal River. Before they were severely hit--directly by the drought, and indirectly by the war effort--the Mauriticians of the south constituted the most highly advantaged group in relation to the rest of the population, who are largely nomads. Because of their ancestral ties with the Toucouleur, Fulani, Soninke and other tribes, living in Mali and Senegal, they have been able to establish an important network of trade exchanges, based essentially on barter.

In the era of Mokhtar Ould Daddah's reign, the problem of the blacks in Mauritania was never raised. It existed nevertheless in the form of a survival of slavery which never went by that name, made less flagrant, it is true, in a system of exploitation of man by man of which the Moors (whites) were also victims.

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One thus has a right to question these sudden attempts, which at the present time can have no other aim than to pit Mauritaniens against other Mauritaniens--all the more so in that these attempts take their pretext from the Arabization policy decided on by Nouakchott with the aim (a correct one) of rewelding national unity. An unpopular measure, by definition, in the eyes of the former colonial powers, who have profited not a little, and are still profiting, from the cultural and political divisions and convulsions in Africa and elsewhere.

Hassan II, in an interview given to a French radio program, made remarks which give comfort to this colonial logic, isolating the blacks of Mauritania from the rest of the people, and in the same spirit, distinguishing the Touaregs of Algeria from the rest of the Algerians. In the view of the king, only the Sahraouis, described as "bandits" by the palace's propaganda, should be Moroccans, by free will or by force. The trouble for the Moroccan monarch is that he is far from being able to transform his desires into realities.

This being so, it is nonetheless true that although the free circulation existing between the populations of the two banks of the Senegal River facilitates exchanges of all sorts and strengthens ethnic and cultural solidarity, without anyone complaining, so far, it can furnish a pretext to anyone who wants to make trouble along the border.

Break Up the Army?

Likewise, all those who for cultural reasons, like those of President Senghor, or from political motives, like those of Hassan II, are not satisfied with the openness of the borders and the peaceful coexistence which this openness presupposes can encourage breakups which the populations concerned are far from desiring.

From this point of view, the recent declarations by President Ould Saleck ("let those who do not feel at home go elsewhere") seem to express a feeling of irritation towards those who are working to splinter Mauritanian national unity.

The challenge is, indeed, very real. In the words of a Mauritanian diplomat, Nouakchott's enemies want to "undermine the morale of the army, in which there are a great many black soldiers, now that the Sahara affair is on the point of being solved.... They are trying, to stir up the waters just when they are on the point of settling."

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